

A handwritten signature in cursive script, followed by the year "2008".

Town of Mashpee Comprehensive Plan

Approved by the Mashpee Planning Board on April 15, 1998

Adopted by Mashpee Town Meeting on May 4, 1998

Certified by the Cape Cod Commission on July 30, 1998

Summary

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Town of Mashpee Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by the Board of Selectmen on June 12, 1997
Repealed by the Board of Selectmen on March 1, 2000
Repealed by the Board of Selectmen on July 16, 1998

SUMMARY

Introduction

Planning Department

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Mashpee's Comprehensive Plan

Mashpee is at a crossroads in its history. We can continue down the path we have set for ourselves by default over the last few decades, or we can choose to take control of our community's future through the adoption of a thoughtful, thorough plan of action. The Comprehensive Plan summarized here sets out one possible approach toward taking the latter path.

Over a period of almost six years, the Mashpee Planning Board and the Mashpee Planning Department solicited the input of other Mashpee boards, officials, departments and all Mashpee residents as we developed, reviewed, amended and voted on the large volume of materials which make up the full text of the Plan. Although the actual drafting of this Plan began in July, 1994, it relied heavily on the results of a public opinion survey completed by 633 Mashpee residents in 1992, a series of six public "issues forums" on each of the topics covered by the plan later that year, five "neighborhood workshops" and a two day June, 1995 "vision workshop", as well as seventeen other advertised public hearings and public meetings. Much was also derived from the 1985-86 work of the 54-member "Committee on Mashpee's Goals and Priorities" and other earlier planning efforts. In preparing the Plan, we also relied heavily on information, opinions and advice provided by many other Town departments and boards, by the Cape Cod Commission, by consultants funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Commission and the Mashpee Water District, by volunteers who served on planning subcommittees and by Mashpee residents who provided written comments or took the time to participate in the numerous public meetings and hearings held by the Planning Board on the individual Plan sections, or "elements".

A great deal of thanks is due to all of those groups and individuals. The input and support received was critical to our work and to the success of this Plan at finding the right path for our town.

This summary includes all of the sections of the Plan which will direct its implementation, including "Goals and Objectives" which describe what it is we want to achieve regarding each of the sixteen subject areas dealt with in the Plan, recommended "Policies" to guide ongoing Town activities and specific "Action Plan" items to be undertaken in both the short term (five years or less) and in later years. A brief summary of the "inventory", "analysis" and other text included in each section of the Plan is also provided. For those wishing to obtain more detailed information on the Plan, or on any of its 16 "elements", copies of the full texts and appendices of each element may also be viewed at either the Mashpee Library, the Town Clerk's office or the Planning Department office at Town Hall. A limited number of copies are available for circulation at the Library or for purchase at the Planning Department office. In addition, a summary is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.capecod.net/mashpee/plan>.

Under the provisions of the Cape Cod Commission Act, the Planning Board forwarded this Plan to the Cape Cod Commission, which preliminarily reviewed it for consistency with the provisions of the County's Regional Policy Plan. After a public hearing it held on Wednesday, April 15, 1998, the Board adopted amendments to the Plan it originally adopted on February 15, 1998 in response to the Commission's consistency report and other comments received on the Plan. The amended Plan was approved by the May 4, 1998 Annual Town Meeting. After the Town Meeting vote to approve the Plan, it was submitted for a final consistency vote by the Cape Cod Commission, which unanimously certified the plan as consistent with the County's Regional Policy Plan, with certain conditions, on July 30, 1998.

We urge you to take the time to review this document, become familiar with its contents and take the opportunity to participate in future Town Meetings, hearings, and other forums which will determine how this Plan will be implemented. We hope that our work meets with your approval and look forward to your help in plotting a course toward a Mashpee that we will all continue to enjoy and be proud to call "home".

MASHPEE PLANNING BOARD

Patrick J. Coffey, Chairman

Dennis H. Balzarini, Vice Chairman

John D. Kuchinski, Clerk

Chance W. Reichel

James M. Dorgan

Scott R. Mitchell, Associate Member

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Introduction

Vision Statement

In developing this Comprehensive Plan, one of the first items undertaken by the Local Planning Committee and the Planning Department was the development of a general statement of the Town's overarching "vision" of how it sees itself today, what it wants for its future, and what it wishes to achieve through this Comprehensive Plan. A June 2 and 3, 1995 "Vision Workshop" held at the Mashpee Middle School provided much of the background discussion which led to the Local Planning Committee's adoption of a "Vision Statement" for the Town, which reads as follows:

Vision Statement

Mashpee is a town with a proud and unique past. Though officially young compared to our neighbors, we draw on roots in a culture that has treasured this place for millennia. While many of us are relative newcomers, we respect the ancient traditions maintained by our Wampanoag community and respect the land and waters that we all now share.

The last half century has been a time of rapid growth, great change and some turmoil for our town. What has emerged is a strong and diverse community that seeks to enter the next century with a common purpose and shared identity.

Our vision for the future honors our past and the treasures that nature has given us. We have been a small community that welcomed many summer guests. Now, as we have grown, we hope to retain some of our rural character, the freedom of our woodlands, the purity of our waters, the closeness to our neighbors, the affordable cost of living and the tranquillity that brought many of us here.

At the same time, we wish to boldly meet the challenges of the new century, to ensure the economic well-being of our citizens and to carefully improve upon what our predecessors have built. We want our children to achieve their maximum potential and our seniors to enjoy the fruits of their life's labors. We wish to feel safe in our homes and on our streets, to avoid the congestion, pollution and stresses of bigger places. We seek to maintain the highest quality in our community's appearance, facilities, services and all we undertake to do.

Our goals may be similar to those of other places and we share much in common with neighboring towns, but we know in our hearts that Mashpee is special. That is why we are here. That is why so many of us care about our town and are proud to call Mashpee home.

Our vision is to keep it so.

Summary

Mashpee's Comprehensive Plan includes sixteen "elements", or sections, dealing with specific planning issues which the Town faces, along with this introductory section and a summary of Capital Facilities needs. The sixteen elements deal with:

- **Affordable Housing**
- **Coastal Resources**
- **Economic Development**
- **Energy**
- **Health & Human Services**
- **Heritage Preservation & Community Character**
- **Land Use & Growth Management**
- **Municipal Buildings & Facilities**
- **Open Space, Recreation & Agriculture**
- **Public Safety**
- **School Facilities**
- **Solid & Hazardous Waste**
- **Transportation**
- **Water Resources**
- **Water & Wastewater Facilities**
- **Wetlands / Wildlife & Plant Habitat**

Because they are so closely interconnected, the elements for Open Space etc. and Wetlands etc. were combined in one document, as were the Water Resources and Water & Wastewater Facilities elements.

In all of the elements of the Plan, there are certain chapters which are key to its implementation. They include **"Goals and Objectives"** which describe what it is we want to achieve regarding each of the sixteen subject areas, **"Recommended Policies"** to guide ongoing Town activities and specific **"Action Plan"** items to be undertaken in both the short term (five years or less) and in later years. The remainder of the text of each element consists primarily of "inventory" chapters describing existing conditions, facilities, resources, issues and problems, and "analysis" chapters describing potential approaches to dealing with the identified issues and problems. Each element has been written to serve both as a readable summary of the issues involved and as a resource for the Town boards, committees and residents who will have to implement the Plan's recommendations. As an additional aid in implementation, extensive appendices have been attached to many of the elements to provide detailed information, suggested bylaws and other useful references.

For those wishing to read only the key implementation chapters, with only limited explanatory material regarding the "inventory" and "analysis" chapters, this summary version of the Plan has also been produced for free distribution to all interested residents.

Plan Development / Public Input

Beginning in 1992, the Mashpee Planning Board and the Mashpee Planning Department solicited the input of other Mashpee boards, officials, departments and all Mashpee residents as they developed, reviewed, amended and voted on the large volume of materials which make up the text of the Plan. Although the actual drafting of this Plan began in July, 1994, it relied heavily on the results of a public opinion survey completed by 633 Mashpee residents in 1992, a series of six public "issues forums" on each of the topics covered by the plan later that year, five "neighborhood workshops" and a two day June, 1995 "vision workshop", as well as seventeen other advertised public hearings and public meetings. Much was also derived from the 1985-86 work of the 54-member "Committee on Mashpee's Goals and Priorities" and other earlier planning efforts. In preparing the Plan, the Board also relied heavily on information, opinions and advice provided by many other Town departments and boards, by the Cape Cod Commission, by consultants funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Commission and the Mashpee Water District, by volunteers who served on planning subcommittees and by Mashpee residents who provided written comments or took the time to participate in the numerous public meetings and hearings held by the Planning Board on the individual Plan "elements".

Over 5000 copies of the 16 page public opinion survey were distributed in May of 1992 at the Annual Town Meeting, at polls during the annual Town election, through the school system and through the Town Clerk's "sticker" office. Completed surveys were returned to specially marked "ballot" boxes at the Library, Town Hall, Post Office and Popponesset General Store. Ballots were coded by place of distribution and results were compiled the same way, as well as in total, to allow for more detailed analysis and adjust for duplication, if necessary. A copy of the survey with the overall results shown is attached as Appendix A.

In August and September of 1992, over 100 residents participated in a series of six "issues forums" that were held to allow for more detailed discussion of the issues addressed in the survey and other issues related to the Plan's elements. The results of both the forums and the survey, along with the goals and policies adopted in 1986 by a 54 member "Committee on Mashpee's Goals and Priorities" and the Goals, Policies and Minimum Performance Standards contained in the County's 1991 Regional Policy Plan, were used in the initial formulation of Goals, Objectives and Policies for this Plan.

Because of the elimination of the Assistant Planner position in late 1992 and diversion of the Town Planner to work on a school facilities master plan, work on the Comprehensive Plan was put on hold until 1994, when the Assistant position was restored. In June, 1994, the Town entered into a formal Memorandum of Agreement with the County on preparation of the Plan and provision of grant funds to the Town. During the latter half of that year, the Goals, Objectives and Policies statements were refined by the Planning Department staff and subcommittees, reviewed and approved by the numerous boards and committees involved in each of the topic areas dealt with by the elements and submitted to the Planning Board. After publication of the full texts in both local newspapers, they were debated at public hearings held on January 18, February 1 and February 15, 1995, at which a number of changes were recommended by the Board and members of the public. Final language for each set of Goals and Objectives was then approved by the Planning Board at a number of public meetings throughout 1995 and early 1996, with minor amendments made in February 1998 and, in response to a preliminary consistency review by the Cape Cod Commission, on April 15, 1998.

On Friday evening and Saturday, June 2 and 3, 1995, the Planning Board, with the assistance of the Cape Cod Commission, sponsored a "Vision Workshop" at the Mashpee Middle School. The workshop began with a community potluck supper followed by a slide show and "visual preference survey" put on by Cape Cod Commission staff members. Residents were asked to rate their attitudes toward a series of

photos of places in Mashpee and elsewhere on the Cape to elicit what it was they liked and disliked about certain landscapes, buildings and development types. Saturday was devoted to small group workshops where residents discussed the characteristics and problems of their neighborhoods, a discussion of town wide opportunities and problems and the development by each group of a generalized sketch master plan for future land use in the town. The workshop was well attended and quite successful at fleshing out some of the public attitudes that had been reflected in earlier public hearings and opinion surveys and led to the drafting of our "Vision Statement" for the Town. It also provided another opportunity for public input prior to the adoption by the Planning Board of the Goals and Objectives for the Land Use & Growth Management element on August 2, 1995.

In September and October of 1995, the Planning Department held a series of neighborhood workshops with residents from five sections of the Town with important planning issues. The workshops were held on September 23, with 45 residents of Mashpee Neck, on September 24, with 25 members of the Popponeset Beach Association, on September 30, with 28 members of the Monomoscoy Improvement Trust, on October 7, with 26 residents of the Mashpee and Santuit Ponds area and on October 14, with 9 residents of the Ashumet and John's Ponds area. Extensive input was received on neighborhood issues and concerns and a number of ideas were brought forth that were incorporated into various elements of the Plan.

Based on all the previously received input, along with the work of consultants engaged to assist with the Affordable Housing, Economic Development, Transportation and Water Resources elements, work on the draft texts of each plan element was completed during 1996 and 1997, with public presentations of each element made at 11 public meetings between September 4, 1996 and November 19, 1997. Prior to these meetings, which were heavily advertised (most through newspaper inserts), element drafts were made available for review, and summaries were distributed, to any interested residents through the Library and Planning Department office.

A summary version of the entire Plan, with the exception of the Energy element and parts of the Land Use element, was provided to all attendees at the October 1997 Annual Town Meeting. It included all Goals, Objectives, Policies and Action Plan recommendations for all but the two elements mentioned, which had not been completed at the time.

In late 1997, a summary version of all Plan elements was also made available on the Town Hall web site at <http://www.capecod.net/mashpee/plan>.

Taking all of the input received into account, the Planning Board approved the individual element texts at a series of meetings held between November 1997 and January 1998 before voting to adopt the Plan as a whole and forward it to the Cape Cod Commission at a public hearing held on February 18, 1998. Based on the contents of the Commission's draft Consistency Review, provided by members of the Commission's review committee at the Planning Board's April 1 meeting, a number of additional amendments were made to the Board's adopted Plan at a public hearing held on April 15, 1998.

In preparation for the Town Meeting vote on May 4, 1998, copies of the Plan were made available for review at the Town Clerk's office, the Planning Department office and at the Mashpee Library, where multiple copies were also available for circulation. Copies of the full Plan were also made available for sale at the Town's copying cost of \$90. After the April 15 amendments, a new summary version of the entire plan, similar to that distributed in October 1997, was also made available for free distribution to all interested residents.

Consistency with Regional Policy Plan

Under the terms of the Cape Cod Commission Act, Mashpee's Comprehensive Plan must be found consistent with the provisions of the Barnstable County Regional Policy Plan (RPP) before the Town can benefit from three provisions of the Act: 1) its authorization for the Town to collect "impact fees" to offset capital costs made necessary by new development, 2) the Town's ability to enter into long-term "development agreements" with the Commission and the developers of large, multi-year projects and 3) the requirement that the Commission conform with our Plan in its review of "Developments of Regional Impact".

In developing this Plan, the Town attempted to follow as closely as possible, given local concerns and attitudes, the provisions of the 1991 RPP, which was in force throughout most of our Plan development process. However, after a revised RPP was adopted in November 1996, all possible efforts were made to adjust our Plan to conform with the new version. The Planning Board believes that it has succeeded and that this Plan is fully consistent with the essential provisions of the 1996 RPP.

Each section of our Plan includes recommended goals, objectives, policies and actions covering different topic areas. Throughout the Plan, as part of its effort to achieve consistency, the Town also adopts by reference the goals, policies and minimum performance standards contained in the 1996 RPP for the purpose of review of Developments of Regional Impact. With regard to non-DRI projects and other planning issues, the Town has attempted to bring its goals, objectives, recommended policies and action plan recommendations into as close conformance with the RPP as is possible given our local circumstances, issues and concerns.

In developing its goals, objectives and policies, the Town used definitions of the terms that it felt were most logical. As a result, the terms we have used are not exactly those that are used in the RPP. In making comparisons between our Plan and the RPP, it should be noted that certain of our Plan's objectives and policies relate directly to the policies contained in the RPP. Others, along with certain action plan items, relate to the RPP's minimum performance standards and, for the purposes of consistency review with the RPP shall be considered minimum performance standards. It should also be noted that, unlike the provisions of the RPP, which serve as regulations applied by the County to developments reviewed by the Cape Cod Commission, our Plan's goals, objectives, policies and recommended actions are not regulations, but are proposed to be implemented through the development and adoption of local bylaws and regulations following approval of the Plan by Town Meeting.

After adopting the Plan on February 18, 1998, the Planning Board forwarded it to the Cape Cod Commission, which preliminarily reviewed it for consistency with the provisions of the County's Regional Policy Plan. The Commission's draft Preliminary Consistency Review was received by the Board at its April 1, 1998 public meeting, at which the Board was able to discuss many of the Commission's comments with members of its review committee. The Board reviewed the Commission's concerns, as well as comments received from other parties and suggested consistency language amendments provided by the Town Planner and held a public hearing on April 15, 1998 to decide on any amendments required to bring the Plan into consistency with the RPP. This Plan that is summarized here includes the amendments made on that date and is the document approved at the May 4, 1998 Annual Town Meeting and submitted to the Commission for final consistency approval. That approval was unanimously granted by the Commission on July 30, 1998.

Plan Implementation

As noted earlier, this Plan is not a regulatory document. Any of its recommendations that involve changes to the Town's bylaws or regulations will have to be individually approved by Town Meeting, in the case of bylaws, and by individual Boards and Commissions empowered to adopt their own regulations after a public hearing, such as the Board of Health, Planning Board, Conservation Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals.

Other recommendations of the Plan do not involve regulations, but focus rather on actions that the Town will need to take to deal with growth-related problems such as traffic increases, loss of wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities, water quality problems, growth in school population etc. Other actions may be intended not to solve problems but to improve our quality of life and enjoyment of our community. These recommendations must be implemented by Town departments such as the DPW, the Leisure Services Department or the School Department, most often with funds that must be approved by Town Meeting.

In order to encourage and monitor the efforts of the Town and its boards, commissions and departments to implement the recommendations of the Plan, a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee was created under the May 4, 1998 Annual Town Meeting.

The Town Meeting article which created the Implementation Committee provides that it consists of the Chairman of the Planning Board or another member of the Board designated by the Chairman, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen or another member of the Board designated by the Chairman, the Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals or another member of the Board designated by the Chairman, the Executive Secretary, the Town Planner, the DPW Director and two residents appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The article directs the Committee to encourage and monitor progress on implementation of the Mashpee Comprehensive Plan, communicate with boards, commissions and departments on their progress and report to the Board of Selectmen twice a year on said progress and to the Town annually.